111

NARRATIVE

OF A

SHIPWRECK

ON THE

ISLAND OF CAPE BRETON,

IN A VOYAGE FROM QUEBEC 1780.

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BRITISH
MUSEUM

ADVERTISEMENT.

IF a genuine and authentic narrative of events, which may be reckoned extraordinary, though they come not up to the ſtandard of adventures, be thought equally intereſting with a fictitious Novel or an improbable Romance, no apology will be requiſite for the preſent publication. Indeed, to apologize for ſo innocent and even laudable an attempt as that to entertain the Public, by any ſpecies of compoſition, ſanctified as it is by cuſtom, ſhould always be thought ſuperfluous; and though that end ſhould not be attained by the following narration, yet at leaſt it may be intereſting to profeſſional men, who are continually expoſed to the ſame diſaſters. Like the draughts of rocks and quick ſands in their charts, it may ſerve to direct them how to avoid the danger, or, when once involved in it, how to conduct themſelves through it.

In the relating of our tranſactions at ſea all technical terms have been avoided as far as poſſible; yet on ſome occaſions they could not be wholly diſpenſed with. The frequent uſe of egotiſm will be excuſed by thoſe who conſider its neceſſity, from the nature of the ſubject.

Though in narratives of this kind there are ſometimes conſiderable embelliſhments and exaggerations, yet the authenticity of the facts here related cannot ſo reaſonably be called in queſtion as thoſe of an anonymous production: for it will not appear probable to any thinking perſon, that I ſhould put my name to a relation either exceeding or ſhort of the truth, when it is conſidered, that there are ſeveral perſons living, who would be ready to contradict my aſſertions.

S. W. PRENTIES.

BRITISH MUSEUM

NARRATIVE, &c.

ON the 17th of November 1780, I embarked on board the St. Lawrence brigantine, then lying in the baſon of Quebec, and bound to New York, being charged with diſpatches from General Haldimand, commander in-chief in that province, to Sir Henry Clinton. The ſame day, on receiving our ſailing orders, we weighed anchor, and dropped down to the harbour called Patrick's Hole, in the iſland of Orleans, in company with a ſchooner bound to the ſame port, on board of which was an Enſign Drummond, of the 44th regiment, with duplicates of General Haldimand's diſpatches. In this place we were detained ſix days by a contrary wind; at the expiration of which time the froſt had ſet in with prodigious ſeverity, and the ice was forming faſt in all parts of the river.

river. Had the wind continued unfair for a few days longer, we ſhould have been entirely blocked up by it, and had happily eſcaped the calamities which afterwards befel us.

On the 24th, the wind being fair, we got under weigh, and proceeded down the river St. Lawrence, as far as the Brandy Pots, iſlands ſo called, about forty leagues from Quebec. At this place the wind veered about to the north-eaſt, which obliged us again to anchor. The weather continued intenſely cold, and the veſſel being leaky, made ſo much water as to keep one pump continually going. A change of wind ſoon after enabled us to proceed on our voyage, and to make the iſland of Anticoſti, which is at the mouth of the river St. Lawrence; when the wind coming round again to the eaſtward, we were obliged to beat off and on between this iſland and Cape Roziere for four days, our veſſel at the ſame time increaſing her leaks to ſuch a degree, that we were under the neceſſity of rigging the other pump, and

and of keeping them both conſtantly at work. Being now in a higher latitude, the ſeverity of the cold had increaſed in proportion, and the ice began to form ſo faſt about the ſhip as to alarm us exceedingly, leſt we ſhould be entirely ſurrounded by it; which we only prevented by cutting and breaking vaſt quantities from her ſides. To this taſk, with that of keeping the pumps at work, the crew, together with the paſſengers, were ſcarcely equal, only nineteen perſons being on board, of whom ſix were paſſengers, and the remainder very indifferent ſeamen. As for the maſter, from whom in the preſent emergency we might have expected ſome degree of exertion, inſtead of attending to his duty and the preſervation of his ſhip, he remained continually in a ſtate of intoxication in his cabin.

On the 29th the wind came round to the north-weſt, and we proceeded down the gulf of St. Lawrence, with two feet water in the ſhip's hold. The wind kept gradually increaſing till the 1ſt of December,

ber, when it blew a perfect gale from the north-west quarter, and the ship's crew being now almost overcome with cold and fatigue, seeing no prospect of gaining upon the leak, the water having already increased to four feet in the hold, nor a possibility of making any port, they came to the resolution of working no longer at the pumps; which was unanimously agreed upon by all the foremast men. They accordingly left off working, and declared themselves quite indifferent about their fate, preferring the alternative of going to the bottom together with the vessel, to that of suffering such severe and incessant labour in so desperate a situation. Their fatigues, it must be confessed, from the 17th of November had been excessive; and though hope might still remain, yet our present circumstances were such as to exclude all probability at least of saving the vessel. However, by the force of persuasion and promises, together with the timely distribution of a pint of wine per man, which I had fortunately brought on board, they were diverted from this desperate

rate reſolution, but with great reluctance, ſaying, with ſome truth, as we afterwards experienced, and with more than they themſelves were aware of, that whether the veſſel filled or not was a matter of no conſequence. This delay, though not exceeding a quarter of an hour, had increaſed the depth of water another foot; but the men adding to their exertions, being encouraged by the wine, which was iſſued to them every half hour, ſucceeded ſo far as to reduce the water in the ſpace of two hours to leſs than three feet. The captain ſtill remained in his cabin.

During the 2d and 3d of December the gale ſeemed to increaſe rather than diminiſh. The ice formed ſo thick on the ſhip's ſides, as to impede her way very much through the water, which furniſhed us with a new labour, that of cutting it off, as faſt as it formed, with ſaws and axes. The leak continued to gain ground. The ſchooner that was in company, far from being able to afford us any aſſiſt-

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ance, was as leaky as ourſelves, having ſtruck upon ſome rocks at the iſland of Coudres, through the ignorance or neglect of her pilot. A heavy ſnow falling it was with the utmoſt difficulty we could get ſight of each other, though at no great diſtance, and in order not to part company, fired a gun every half hour. The ſchooner at length made no anſwer to our guns, whence we concluded ſhe had foundered; nor were we wrong in our ſuppoſition. There were ſixteen perſons on board, every one of whom periſhed.

On the fourth the gale increaſed prodigiouſly, and the ſea began to run high, with a heavy fall of ſnow, ſo as to prevent our ſeeing twenty yards a head of the veſſel. The men being exceſſively fatigued, the water had riſen to its uſual quantity of between four and five feet. The mate, whom I have not yet taken notice of, and who was an intelligent clever fellow, and well acquainted with his profeſſion, judged, from the diſtance we had run, that we could not now be far

far from the Magdalen Iſlands, which lie about midway in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Theſe iſlands are nothing more than a cluſter of rocks, ſome appearing above, and others hidden under the water, and have been fatal to many veſſels. Seamen wiſh often to make them in fine weather, as they ſerve to take a new departure from; but in foggy or blowing weather they as ſtudiouſly avoid them. We found the mate's conjecture but too well founded; for in leſs than two hours we heard the ſea breaking upon the rocks, and ſoon after diſcovered the principal iſland, which is called the Deadman, cloſe under our lee, the point of which it was with the greateſt difficulty that we weathered. Having happily cleared the main iſland, we were ſtill far from thinking ourſelves ſecure, for being unable, on account of the heavy fall of ſnow, to ſee many yards a head of the veſſel, and being in the midſt of the ſmall iſlands, there appeared very little probability that we ſhould paſs clear of them all in the ſame manner. Not being able to diſtinguiſh any

one in time to avoid it, we were obliged to leave the veſſel to the direction of Providence, and fortunately, I might ſay almoſt miraculouſly, run through them all without damage. The anxiety and perturbation of mind that the crew and paſſengers were in, while in the midſt of theſe rocks, may be eaſily conceived; and now that the danger was over, it turned out to be a fortunate occurrence for us. For, by this time, the ſailors being ready to ſink under the accumulated diſtreſſes of cold and fatigue, and depreſſed by the little hopes they had of ſaving the veſſel, had nearly determined a ſecond time to quit the pumps, and leave the veſſel to her fate, when acquiring freſh ſpirits from the danger we had eſcaped, and, as the vulgar are generally inclined to ſuperſtition, attributing what was perhaps accident alone to the immediate interpoſition of Providence, they agreed to continue their efforts a little longer; towards which they were likewiſe not a little encouraged by the wine which I diſtributed to them occaſionally.

During

During the night the gale continuing, and the ſea running very high, we were apprehenſive of being what ſeamen call pooped; which happened in fact as we apprehended: for about five in the morning of the 5th, we ſhipped a ſea abaft, which ſtove in our dead lights, filled the cabin, and waſhed the maſter out of his bed, where he had remained ever ſince the commencement of the gale. This accident we found attended with worſe conſequences than we at firſt imagined; for we ſoon diſcovered, from the increaſe of the leaks, that the ſtern-poſt was ſtarted by the impulſe of the ſea. Having nothing in the after-hold, we had no other reſource but that of attempting to ſtop the leaks abaft with ſome pieces of beef, which we cut ſmall for that purpoſe. But this expedient we ſoon found ineffectual, and the water continued to gain on us faſter than ever. The ſailors finding all their labours fruitleſs, and that the leak, which was conſtantly increaſing before, was now rendered by our late misfortune entirely irreparable, abandoned themſelves totally

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to deſpair, and again refuſed to work at the pumps any longer. They had not however long remained inactive before we contrived once more to perſuade them to make another effort to clear the veſſel, but, to our great ſurprize and conſternation, we found the pumps ſo hard frozen that it was impoſſible to move them.

All endeavours now to prevent the ſhip from filling were vain, ſo that in a very ſhort time ſhe was entirely full of water. Having no longer, as we imagined, the ſmalleſt foundation for hope, we reſigned ourſelves with as much fortitude as poſſible to our fate, which we expected every moment to be that of going to the bottom. Notwithſtanding, when the veſſel was quite full, we obſerved ſhe was very little deeper in the water than before, and then recollecting a circumſtance, which the trouble and confuſion we had been in had almoſt obliterated, namely, that we had a quantity of lumber on board, we immediately accounted for the phenomenon of her not ſinking beyond a certain depth in the water, and began to recal hopes of

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ſaving ourſelves at leaſt, if we could but prevent her from overſetting (which veſſels are apt to do when full of water) till we could make the iſland of St. John's, or ſome other iſland in the gulph. Having no guns on deck, and not much lumber, to render the ſhip top-heavy, we contrived to prevent her from overſetting by keeping her directly before the wind; though not without ſome difficulty, as from the little way ſhe made through the water, the waves frequently waſhed clear over the decks. Beſides taking care to keep the veſſel ſteady, we took every precaution to ſecure our boat from being waſhed overboard, the loſs of which would in our preſent circumſtances be a terrible misfortune. We had little or no water in the cabin, by its being raiſed above the level of the main deck; this afforded us ſome ſhelter from the ſeverity of the weather, finding it unneceſſary to have any more than one man upon deck, to govern the helm, and keep the ſhip directly before the wind, who was faſtened by a rope to prevent his being carried away by the waves,

waves, which at times made a free paſſage over us.

The gale ſtill continued without remiſſion, the ſnow falling ſo thick at the ſame time as to prevent our ſeeing to the maſt-head. We knew from the diſtance we had run that we could not be far from land. The captain imagined from our courſe, during the night, and ſince we filled in the morning, that we muſt be near the iſland of St. John's, which lies between the Magdalen iſlands and the gut of Canſo. This gave us hopes of ſaving our lives, in caſe we could run aſhore on ſome ſandy part of it, till they were deſtroyed by the further information we had from the captain, that the north-eaſt ſide of the iſland was nothing but a continued reef of rocks from one end to the other, and that there was but one harbour where ſhips could put in, which he recollected was on the oppoſite ſide of the iſland. In a few hours after we obſerved the waves grow ſhorter and break higher, which is always found to be the caſe on ap-

approaching the ſhore, and likewiſe a number of gulls and ducks flying about, a further ſign we could not be far diſtant from it.

We now concluded that we were about to run upon the rocks, which, the captain informed us, ſkirted the north-eaſt ſide of the iſland, and on approaching the land laboured under greater dread and apprehenſion, than amidſt all the dangers we had before experienced, the idea of being daſhed upon thoſe tremendous rocks being more terrible than that of being buried, as our companions were, in the boſom of the ocean. The ſhip had ſtill conſiderable way through the water, tho' full, and with no other ſail ſet but a cloſe-reefed fore-top-ſail, the only one we could diſplay, which had hitherto ſtood the gale, being new and of the ſtrongeſt canvas. The captain propoſed bringing the ſhip to, to keep her off the land, which I oppoſed, as well as the mate, as it amounted almoſt to a certainty that we ſhould overſet her in the attempt; and beſides,

ſhould we be able to effect it, ſhe muſt after all drive aſhore from the violence of the wind, being unable to ſet any more ſail to bear up againſt it. Our opinion, however, was rejected, and an attempt was made to brace about the fore yard, but it was found impracticable, the ropes and blocks being covered with ice. We were therefore obliged to let it remain as before, and the water having ſuddenly changed its colour, we expected the ſhip to ſtrike every inſtant. Small as our expectations were of ſaving our lives, I thought it incumbent on me to take every precaution to ſave the diſpatches I was charged with, and therefore ordered my ſervant to open my trunks, and collect all the letters they contained, which I put into a handkerchief, and tied it about my waiſt. He at the ſame time offered me ſome money, to the amount of one hundred and eighty guineas, which I deſired him to diſpoſe of as he thought proper, thinking it in the preſent emergency rather an incumbrance than a matter worthy of preſervation. My ſervant, however,

ever, thought otherwiſe, and took care to put the money up as carefully as his maſter did the diſpatches; which of the two turned out to be the moſt uſeful, the event will prove.

The weather continued thick as uſual till about one o'clock, when ſuddenly clearing up, we diſcovered the land a head, diſtant about three leagues. This ſight gave us no ſmall ſatisfaction, taking it at firſt to be the iſland of St. John's, which being inhabited by ſeveral French and Engliſh families, we might have expected ſome aſſiſtance from them, but on a nearer view found from the plans we had on board, that it had not the leaſt appearance of that iſland, there being no ſuch mountains and precipices laid down, as we diſcovered. On drawing nigher we obſerved the ſea break high, and have a very diſmal appearance about three miles from the land. As it was neceſſary for us to paſs through thoſe breakers ere we could gain the ſhore, we expected that our fate would be determined there; but contrary

to our expectations we found plenty of water, ſo that we went over the reef without ſtriking, though not without ſhipping many heavy ſeas, which had not the veſſel's timbers been ſtrong, and her loading light, muſt infallibly have daſhed her to pieces. The land now began to have a very dreadful appearance, ſeeming at the diſtance we were off to be high and rocky; but on approaching within a mile of it, we had the pleaſure of deſcrying a fine ſandy beach and a bold ſhore: the ſea ran high, but not to ſuch a degree as on the reef we had already paſſed. As we came nigh the land, the water continued to have a depth beyond our moſt ſanguine wiſhes, ſo as to allow us to come within fifty or ſixty yards of the ſhore before we ſtruck. Now was the time for every man's apprehenſions to be alive, as we might expect on touching the ſhore that the ſhip would go to pieces. On the firſt ſtroke the main-maſt went out of the ſtep, and on the ſecond the fore-maſt, but neither of them went over-board, the deal boards in the hold being ſtowed ſo cloſe together that the

the maſts had no room to play below; at the ſame time the rudder was unſhipped with ſuch violence as to be near killing one of the ſailors. As ſoon as the ſhip had grounded, the ſea began to beat over her in every part, each wave lifting her four or five feet nearer the ſhore. In a ſhort ſpace of time the ſtern was beat in by the ſea; and then, having no ſhelter in the cabin, we were obliged to go upon deck, and hang by the ſhrouds, leſt we ſhould be waſhed overboard. In this aukward ſituation we remained till the veſſel was beat ſo high by the waves that we could venture to walk upon the decks. We now perceived that the ſhip's keel was broken, which we imagined would occaſion her to go to pieces; this however did not happen for the preſent, which I can only attribute to the boards in the hold being ſo interwoven with each other, and frozen together by the ice, as to give a degree of ſolidity to the veſſel.

Our firſt care now was to get out the boat, which was not to be accompliſhed with-

without difficulty, on account of the quantity of ice that was in and about it, our numbers being likewiſe reduced by the intoxication of ſeveral of the crew, who had thought that the moſt effectual method of getting rid of the apprehenſions they laboured under. Our veſſel had, from the violence of the waves daſhing againſt her, broached to, with her broadſide to the wind, ſo that ſhe afforded ſome ſhelter for the boat to the leeward. Having with much labour cleared the boat of ice, and prepared her for launching, I ordered ſome liquor to be diſtributed to thoſe who had not yet taſted of any, and then aſked, if any were willing to embark with me in the boat, and make the attempt to gain the ſhore. The ſea running ſo high, that it appeared ſcarcely poſſible that the boat could live in it for a minute, very few were willing to make an experiment ſo full of riſk; ſo that all who offered themſelves were the mate and two ſailors, together with my ſervant, and a boy who was a paſſenger on board. What gave us the greateſt em-

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barraſſment in this undertaking was the ſurf which broke over us every moment, and the intenſeneſs of the cold, which froze every drop of water immediately, ſo as to cover our cloaths with a ſheet of ice. At length we got the boat into the water, and having put an axe and a ſaw into it, I jumped in, followed by my ſervant and the mate. The boy, in attempting to jump into the boat, had the miſfortune to fall into the water; and though I contrived to drag him into the boat; yet this accident was in the iſſue, by the chill it gave him, of fatal conſequence to the unfortunate lad. The two ſailors, who had agreed to go with us, next jumped into the boat, and all the reſt ſeemed ready, notwithſtanding their former heſitation, to follow the example, when I found it neceſſary to ſhove her off from the ſhip's ſide; for, being very ſmall, ſhe certainly would have ſunk had ſo many perſons crowded in together. The ſhip was lying about forty yards from the ſhore; but before we got half-way to it, were overtaken by a wave that almoſt filled

lled the boat, and the next drove us on the dry ſand.

To find ourſelves once more ſafe upon the land gave us no ſmall ſatisfaction, though in ſo deſtitute a ſtate: the joy at having eſcaped thoſe dangers which ſo long had been the chief objects of our dread, made us for a few moments forget that we were ſnatched from them merely to be expoſed to others more inevitable, that we had eſcaped one ſpecies of death, probably to undergo another more lingering and painful. What moſt affected us was the diſtreſs of our companions whom we had left on board, whoſe lamentations and cries for help we could hear very diſtinctly. But alas! what help could we give them? Our boat being beat high upon the ſand could now be of no uſe, neither to us nor to them, while the ſea was running to ſuch a degree, that it was not in the power of man to afford them any aſſiſtance.

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The night was now approaching, and we had not long remained in this ſituation ere we found ourſelves getting ſtiff with cold; and the gale continuing as ſevere as ever, we were obliged to wade with extreme difficulty, up to our waiſts in ſnow, to the ſhelter of a thick wood about two hundred and fifty yards from the beach. This furniſhed ſome relief from the piercing North-weſt wind; yet a fire was ſtill wanting to warm our frozen limbs, and we had not wherewithal to kindle one. We had indeed taken the precaution to put a tinder-box in the boat, but the water had rendered it totally uſeleſs. Freezing as we ſtood, there was nothing to be done, but to keep the blood in motion by exerciſe; and I had enough to do in perſuading the men to move about, being better acquainted with the nature of cold climates, and that of froſt, than any of my companions. My advice was ſtrictly adhered to for about half an hour, when the young paſſenger, whom I have already mentioned, being overcome with the ſeverity of the weather, threw

himſelf down, in order to ſleep; for extreme cold always occaſions a ſleepy ſenſation that is not eaſily to be reſiſted. I uſed my utmoſt endeavours both by perſuaſion and force to rouſe him, and make him ſtand on his legs, but all to no purpoſe; ſo I was obliged to let him remain there. After walking about for half an hour longer, during which time I felt the ſtrongeſt inclination myſelf to lie down and ſleep, but knew the fatal conſequences of attempting it, I went to the place where the boy lay, and putting my hand on his face, and finding it quite cold, I obſerved to the mate, who was cloſe by, that I believed he was dead. To which the lad anſwered immediately, that he was not yet dead, but would be ſo very ſhortly, and requeſted I would write a letter, if I ſurvived, to his father at New York. In about ten minutes we found that he had expired, and, as I imagined, without any pain whatever, but at leaſt without any that was violent. Theſe trivial matters would be unworthy of notice, but as they ſerve to ſhew the effects of intenſe cold on

the human body, and to prove that freezing to death is not always attended with ſo much pain as is commonly ſuppoſed.

The death of the boy could not deter the reſt of my fellow-ſufferers from giving way to this drowſy ſenſation; and three of them lay down in ſpite of my repeated exhortations to the contrary. Finding it impoſſible to keep them on their legs, I broke a branch, and deſiring the mate to do the ſame, our employment during the remainder of the night was to prevent them from ſleeping, by beating them continually with the branches. The ſo much wiſhed for daylight at length appeared, when I deſired the men to pull down their ſtockings, and let me examine their legs, as they complained of having very little feeling in them. As ſoon as I caſt my eyes on them, I perceived very clearly that they were frozen at leaſt half way up, and deſired they would immediately rub them with ſnow, which they did for a conſiderable time, but to little purpoſe; for

it was impoſſible to reſtore them to any feeling.

I then went with the mate to the ſea ſhore, to ſee if we could diſcover any traces of the ſhip, and our companions whom we had left on board, and to our great ſurprize and ſatisfaction found ſhe had not yet gone to pieces, though the wind continued with unabated ſeverity. My firſt ſtudy now was how to get them aſhore, our own ſafety as well as theirs depending on it. I was almoſt ſtiff with cold, but found feeling in every part, and was therefore certain I could not be frozen. The veſſel had by this time beat much nigher the ſhore, and the diſtance was but very ſmall at low water. It being high water when we arrived on the beach, we waited till the tide was out, and then deſiring the people on board to throw us a rope, having firſt faſtened it to the gib-boom, they contrived to ſwing themſelves by means of it within a few yards of the ſhore, and waiting the motion of the ſea as it broke, they all got ſafe on the land except

except a carpenter, who was a paſſenger in the veſſel. He did not think proper to venture in this manner, or was unable, having the night before made rather too free with the bottle. We were happy however to get ſo many of them on ſhore, every one of whom, a few hours before, we concluded muſt have periſhed.

The captain had fortunately, previous to coming on ſhore, put ſome materials for ſtriking a fire in his pocket, which we did with all poſſible expedition, and were happy for ſome time in hovering about it, and warming our benumbed limbs; conſidering the extreme cold we had endured for ſuch a length of time, no luxury could be equal to that of the fire; but this gratification was, like many others, to ſeveral of my companions followed by the moſt excruciating pain, as ſoon as their frozen parts began to thaw. Several of thoſe who had remained all night in the veſſel, as well as thoſe who came aſhore with me in the boat, had been frozen in different parts of their members.

bers; the diſtreſs that was now painted in the faces of theſe unfortunate men, from the tortures they underwent, was beyond expreſſion: this I knew would be the caſe before I heard them complain, but did not think it neceſſary to give them any intimation of it.

When we came to examine into our numbers, I obſerved that a Capt. Green, a paſſenger, was miſſing, and was informed that he had fallen aſleep on board the veſſel, and had been frozen to death. We were rather uneaſy about the man who had remained on board, but had ſome hopes of ſaving his life, in caſe the veſſel did not go to pieces, at the return of low water: but it being too difficult to undertake in the night, we were under the neceſſity of waiting till the following day. This night we paſſed a little better than the laſt; yet notwithſtanding we had a good fire, we found extreme inconvenience from the total want of covering, as well as from hunger, a new miſery, that we had hitherto been unacquainted with. Beſides

ſides which, the greateſt part of our number were in the moſt wretched ſtate imaginable from the ſores occaſioned by the froſt.

The next morning, as many of us as were able went to the beach to contrive ſome means to extricate the carpenter, whoſe voice we heard on board the veſſel. The ſea ſtill running with the ſame violence as before, we could not put out the boat to his aſſiſtance, and were therefore obliged to wait the return of low water, when we perſuaded him to come on ſhore in the ſame manner as the others had done; but this he accompliſhed with much difficulty, being very weak and frozen in different parts of his limbs. We ſtill remained without any kind of proviſions, and began to be reduced in ſtrength for want of nouriſhment.

The 7th and 8th the gale continued as boiſterous as ever, and in the night between the 8th and 9th of December the ſhip went to pieces from the ſtern to the main-

main-maſt, from the extreme violence with which the ſea broke againſt her: by this part of her going to pieces, we obtained ſome proviſions which waſhed on ſhore, viz. ſome pieces of ſalt beef, likewiſe ſome freſh meat that hung over the ſtern, and a quantity of onions that the captain had on board for ſale. This relief was very ſeaſonable, it being now the fourth day ſince we had eat any kind of of proviſion whatever. Having no utenſils we dreſſed our meat in the beſt manner we could, and made what we thought a moſt delicious repaſt. The ſenſe of hunger being aſſuaged, we ſet to work in collecting all the proviſion we could find ſcattered upon the beach, being apprehenſive that we ſhould not ſoon get a ſupply from any other quarter. This done, our next care was to get ourſelves under cover, and form ſome kind of ſhelter from the piercing blaſt. This taſk was not an eaſy one, ſo many of our company being unable to move, and of the remainder none but the mate and myſelf were capable of any active exertion,

exertion, being all more or leſs bitten by the froſt; our number being reduced to ſeventeen, by the loſs of two perſons, as already mentioned. A quantity of deals had floated on ſhore from the wreck, of which we carried about two hundred and fifty into the wood, and by ten at night completed a kind of houſe, about twenty feet long and ten wide; which was conſtructed in the following manner. We cut two poles of the above-mentioned length, and, having no nails, laſhed them at a proper height on the outſide of two trees, at the ſame diſtance (of 20 feet) from each other: the interval between the poles, which was equal to the breadth of the trees, ſerved for the ſmoke of our fire to go through, the fire itſelf being laid in an oblong poſition, extending itſelf nearly the whole length of the houſe. Againſt theſe croſs poles we placed boards with a ſlope of about 60 degrees towards the ground, which conſtituted the two principal ſides. The two other ſides were compoſed of boards placed perpendicular, the trunks of the trees being

taken in, and forming part of each ſide; on one of theſe ſides, that looked towards the ſouth-eaſt, we left a vacancy for the entrance. This buſineſs being over, we examined the quantity of proviſions we had collected, and had the ſatisfaction to find that we had in ſtore between two and three hundred pounds of ſalt beef, and a conſiderable ſtock of onions. As to bread, we had none; for, when the veſſel went to pieces, the caſks ſtove and the bread of courſe was loſt. Œconomy and good management were now highly neceſſary to make our little ſtock laſt as long as poſſible, it being quite uncertain when we could get any relief, and, in conſequence, it was determined, that each man, whether ſick or well, ſhould be confined to a quarter of a pound of beef and four onions per day, as long as the latter ſhould laſt. This wretched allowance, but juſt enough to keep a man from ſtarving, was the utmoſt we thought it prudent to afford, leſt we ſhould be in an uninhabited country; for as yet we were rather uncertain on what coaſt we were caſt away; though

though afterwards on comparing circumſtances we concluded it muſt be on the iſland of Cape Breton.

On the 11th of December the gale abated, and gave us an opportunity to launch out boat, and get on board the remainder of the wreck. Three of us accordingly went on board, having with much labour launched the boat, and cleared her of the ſand and ice. As ſoon as we got on board the wreck, we went to work at opening the hatches, and having but one axe, and the cables being frozen over them in a ſolid lump of ice, it took the whole day to accompliſh it. The 12th, the weather being ſtill moderate, we went again on board, and having cleared away the remainder of the cable, and cut away part of the deck, in order to make room to get out two caſks of onions, with a ſmall barrel of beef, containing about one hundred and twenty pounds, and three barrels of apples, ſhipped by a Jewiſh merchant of Quebec. We likewiſe got a quarter-caſk of potatoes, a bottle of oil, which proved very ſervice-

able to the men's ſores, another axe, a large iron pot, two camp kettles, and about twelve pounds of tallow candles. With much difficulty we got this great ſupply on ſhore, which gave no ſmall comfort to our miſerable fellow ſufferers. On the 13th we made it our buſineſs to get our proviſions ſtowed away in a corner of the hut, when, on opening the apple caſks, found their contents, to our great ſurprize, converted into bottles of Canadian balſam, a more valuable commodity to be ſure than apples, but what we could gladly have exchanged in our preſent ſituation for ſomething more friendly to the ſtomach than to the conſtitution. This diſappointment, as may be ſuppoſed, extorted a few hearty good wiſhes towards the Jew; yet we found afterwards ſome uſe for his Canadian balſam, though, I believe, ſomewhat different from what he intended it ſhould be applied to.

The conſiderable ſupply we got from on board the wreck enabled us the next day to add four onions to our daily allowance.

ance. We went on board once more on the 14th, and cut as much of the ſails as poſſible from the bowſprit, with part of which we covered our hut, and made it tolerably warm and comfortable, notwithſtanding the ſeverity of the weather. By this time the ſores of the men who had been froſt bitten began to mortify, and cauſed their toes, fingers, and other parts of the limbs affected, to rot off, their anguiſh being at the ſame time almoſt intolerable. The carpenter, who came on ſhore after the others, had loſt the greateſt part of his feet, and on the 14th at night became delirious, in which unhappy ſtate he continued, till death releaſed him the following day from his miſerable exiſtence. We covered him with ſnow and branches of trees, having neither ſpade nor pick-axe to dig a grave for him, nor would it have been poſſible, if we had been provided with them, the ground being in thoſe climates ſo hard frozen during the winter as to be almoſt impenetrable. On the 17th our ſecond mate expired in the ſame manner, having been delirious

for

for ſome hours before he went off. We felt but very little concern at the death of our companions either on their account or our own: for, in the firſt place, we conſidered it rather a happineſs than a misfortune to be deprived of life in our preſent wretched ſituation, and, in the ſecond, becauſe there became the fewer mouths to conſume our little ſtock of proviſions: indeed, had not ſome paid the debt of nature, we ſhould in the end have been reduced to the ſhocking neceſſity of killing and devouring one another. Though not yet reduced to this neceſſity, our condition was ſo thorougly miſerable, that it ſeemed ſcarcely poſſible for any new diſtreſs to make a ſenſible addition to it. Beſides the proſpect of periſhing through want in that deſolate place, the pain ariſing from a perpetual ſenſe of hunger and cold, having no covering but the cloaths upon our backs, the agony that the greateſt part were in from the ſores occaſioned by the froſt was beyond expreſſion, while their groans were almoſt equally diſtreſſing to the remainder—but what affected me more

more than all our other miſeries, was the quantity of vermin, proceeding from the men's ſores, and continually increaſing, which infeſted us in every part, and rendered us diſguſting even to ourſelves. Several, however, who had been but ſlightly frozen, recovered in a ſhort time, with the loſs of a few toes and fingers; no one having entirely eſcaped the froſt but myſelf. On the 20th another ſailor died, after having been, like the others, ſome time in a delirium, and was buried, or rather covered, in the ſame manner. Our number was now reduced to fourteen perſons; yet we did not think it expedient to increaſe the allowance of proviſions, but ſtill kept it at the rate originally fixed on, of a quarter of a pound of beef *per diem*.

The mate and I had frequently gone out together, ſince we were ſhipwrecked, in order to diſcover any traces of inhabitants; but hitherto without ſucceſs. On the 24th of December we walked about 10 or 12 miles up a fine river, on the ice, where

where we obſerved many tracks of mooſe deer and other animals, ſome of which we might have killed, had we been ſo fortunate as to be provided with arms and ammunition. In our progreſs up the river we diſcovered ſeveral trees cut on one ſide, as we imagined, by an axe, which gave us reaſon to think there might be Indians near at hand. On going up to the place we could plainly perceive, that there had been ſome there lately, by their wig-wam, which ſtill remained with ſome freſh bark about it. We likewiſe found the ſkin of a mooſe-deer hanging acroſs a pole. We travelled a good way further, in hopes of making ſome more diſcoveries of this nature; but to no purpoſe. It gave us nevertheleſs ſome ſatisfaction to find, that we were in a place where inhabitants had been lately, as it was probable they might again return there. In caſe this ſhould happen, I cut a long pole and ſtuck it in the ice upon the river; then with my kniſe, which I always took care to preſerve, as it was the only one amongſt us, cut a piece of bark from a birch

birch tree, and forming it into the ſhape of a hand, with the fore finger extended and pointing towards our hut, fixed it on the top of the pole, and took away the mooſe ſkin, in order that they might perceive that ſome perſons had been on the ſpot ſince they left it, and the route they had taken in their return. We then purſued the way to our habitation, and communicated this agreeable information to our companions, who were not yet able to move about: trifling as the hopes were which we could in reaſon derive from this diſcovery, yet it gave them conſiderable ſatisfaction. Twenty days being elapſed ſince our ſhipwreck, and our proviſions being very much reduced, I began to entertain a ſuſpicion, that there was ſome foul play during my abſence at different times from the hut in ſearch of inhabitants. I was therefore determined to find out the truth, if poſſible, by keeping a conſtant watch at night; by which means I at length diſcovered, that the depredators were no other than the captain and two ſailors, who had conſumed no leſs

than ſeventy pounds, beſides a quantity of onions, in ſo ſhort a ſpace of time. To prevent ſuch unfair practices for the future, the mate and I never went out together, one of us conſtantly remaining in the hut.

We continued in a ſtate of ſuſpenſe from our laſt diſcovery for ſome days, when giving up at length all hopes of ſeeing any Indians or inhabitants in this place, having proviſions only for ſix weeks longer, and a few of our men, together with the captain, being recovered, I propoſed leaving our habitation, with as many as could work in the boat, in ſearch of inhabitants. This propoſal was unanimouſly aſſented to; but when we came to think how it was to be put in execution, a new difficulty ſtarted itſelf, namely, that of repairing the boat, which had been beat in ſuch a manner by the ſea upon the beach, that every ſeam was open. We firſt attempted to ſtop them with dry oakum, but ſoon found that it would not anſwer the intended purpoſe, and having

ſaved

ſaved no pitch from on board the wreck, we began to deſpair of the poſſibility of repairing them. I, at length, thought of a ſcheme for making a kind of ſuccedaneum for pitch of the Canadian balſam, which, as I before mentioned, had been ſhipped for apples, and had been by us brought on ſhore under that deception. We accordingly went to work in making the experiment, and boiled a quantity of it in the iron kettle we had ſaved, which frequently taking off the fire, that the ſtuff might cool, we ſoon brought it to a proper conſiſtence. Having got ready a ſufficient quantity of it, we turned up the boat, and having cleaned her bottom, gave her a coat of the balſam, which effectually ſtopped up all crevices for the preſent. This done, we got a ſmall ſail rigged to a maſt, which ſhipped and unſhipped occaſionally; and then pitched upon the perſons who were to go with me in the boat.

By the 1ſt of January, with much difficulty and fatigue, we got our boat in

tolerable condition, ſo that ſhe could ſwim without making much water, likewiſe our maſt and ſail rigged, in caſe we ſhould happen to get a fair wind, which we could not often expect on this coaſt at the preſent ſeaſon of the year; for, during the winter months, it blows almoſt conſtantly from weſt to north-weſt, which is immediately on the land: we could not expect therefore to have much occaſion for our ſail; nevertheleſs it might ſometimes be ſerviceable, and afford ſome relief to the rowers. We had agreed to take ſix in the boat, viz. the captain and mate, two ſailors, myſelf and ſervant: of the others none were ſo far recovered as to be judged equal to the fatigues we might expect in this expedition. Our ſhoes being all nearly worn out, my employment, during the whole of the next day, was to make a kind of mowkiſins, or Indian ſhoes, of canvas. My needle was nothing more than the handle of a pewter ſpoon, which I had faſhioned as well as I could for the purpoſe, ſewing them with a thread of the ſame ſtuff. As ſoon as I had

had made twelve pair, which was two for each man in our party, we divided the proviſions that remained into fourteen equal parts, which amounted only to a quarter of a pound of beef per day for ſix weeks; thoſe, who were to remain behind, ſharing as much as we who were to go in the boat, notwithſtanding the hardſhips we were in all probability to undergo. Every neceſſary preliminary being ſettled, we propoſed ſetting off from this place the next day; but the wind blowing freſh at north-weſt, we were obliged to remain where we were till the 4th. By this time the ice, floating in prodigious quantities on the coaſt, and in ſome places forming, and blocking up the bays, rendered our undertaking extremely hazardous; yet we thought it more adviſeable to run any danger, and to encounter any hardſhip, than to remain in our preſent ſituation with a certainty of ſtarving.

In the afternoon of the 4th, the wind moderating, we got our proviſions, and what-

whatever little matters might be of ſervice to us, into the boat; and, having taken leave of our companions, ſet off on our expedition. Having got about eight miles from the place of our ſhipwreck, the wind began to increaſe and blow very hard at ſouth-eaſt, which was immediately off the ſhore. The boat, as well as the oars, being none of the beſt, we were on the point of being blown out to ſea, but by dint of rowing made ſhift to get into a deep bay about a mile a head, where we thought we might paſs the night with ſafety. Having got every thing on ſhore, we hauled our boat up as high as our ſtrength would admit, ſo as to prevent the ſea from doing her any more damage. This done, we ſet to work in lighting our fire, and cutting our wood for the night: we likewiſe cut ſome pine branches, the ſmaller of which ſerved us to lie on, and the larger, in the form of a wigwam, to ſhelter us from the inclemency of the weather.

The

The place we had landed on was a fine ſandy beach, with little or no ſnow on it. Having obſerved ſome ſmall pieces of wood caſt on ſhore by the tide, that had formerly been cut with an axe, and a number of long poles ſcattered along the edge of the bank, which had likewiſe been cut in the ſame manner, I thought it likely there might be ſome inhabitants near at hand, and propoſed, as ſoon as we had taken a little refreſhment, to go along the beach to a high point of land at about two miles diſtance, which was clear of wood, and appeared to be cultivated, thinking from thence we might make ſome uſeful diſcoveries. I accordingly ſet out ſoon after with two of the men, and, before we had proceeded a mile, ſaw the remains of a ſhallop, or Newfoundland fiſhing boat, almoſt covered with ſand, which ſeemed to have been ſet on fire. This gave us hopes of diſcovering ſomething elſe to our ſatisfaction, and we proceeded as faſt as we could to the point of land. Having gained the top of it, we deſcried, to our inexpreſſible joy, a few houſes

houſes about half a mile diſtant, towards which we directed our courſe, having no doubt but that we ſhould now meet with ſome relief; but on coming up to them found they were only the remains of ſome old ſtore-houſes, which had been built there for the curing of cod fiſh, and to all appearance had been abandoned ſome years before.

This was a mortifying diſappointment to us. We determined however to make the moſt of our diſcovery, and obſerving a number of old caſks lying about in different parts, we ſearched them, as well as the houſes, very minutely, in hopes of finding ſome proviſions; but to no purpoſe. As we walked along the point, we gathered about a quart of cranberries, ſome of which we eat, preſerving the remainder for our companions. Having reconnoitred every part of this point without any further ſucceſs, we returned to our boat, and communicating the diſcoveries we made to our companions, gave them their ſhare of the berries we had

had gathered. Even theſe diſcoveries gave them much ſatisfaction, as they tended to confirm our hopes of finding ſome inhabitants in the courſe of our voyage along the coaſt.

In the mean time, the wind came round to the north-weſt, and blew with ſuch violence as to prevent us from proceeding on our voyage. It continued the ſame from the 5th to the 7th, when, happening to get up in the middle of the night, I was aſtoniſhed on obſerving while the wind continued blowing as hard as ever, that the ſea was entirely without agitation. I immediately awoke the mate, to inform him of this extraordinary phænomenon, and going down to the beach together to know the cauſe, we found the ſea entirely covered with ice, nothing but a large ſheet of it being to be ſeen for leagues around. This was an alarming circumſtance, as it ſeemed to preclude all poſſibility of proceeding any further, and might give us cauſe even to regret having left our habitation: for, though we were

ſo near, it was impoſſible to return by land, beſides other impediments, on account of the depth of ſnow, which was impaſſable unleſs with ſnow-ſhoes.

The wind continued to blow from the ſame quarter for two days longer, and at length, on the 9th, it became perfectly calm. Next morning the wind came round to the ſouth-eaſt, which was directly off the land, and in a ſhort time blew extremely hard, ſo that by four o'clock in the afternoon, there was not a piece of ice to be ſeen along the coaſt, the whole of it being blown out to ſea. This was a very pleaſing ſight to us, as it gave us a proſpect of being extricated from our preſent dreary ſituation. However, the violence of the wind prevented us from moving till the 11th of January, when the weather being moderate, and a fine light breeze blowing along the coaſt, we launched our boat with much difficulty, being greatly reduced in ſtrength for want of a due degree of nouriſhment. Having got round the clear

clear point of land, we hoiſted our ſail and put before the wind.

The weather being very moderate, and little or no ſea running, we made tolerable way, and had not proceeded far before we deſcried an extremely high point, about ſeven leagues a head, with a continued precipice along the coaſt, ſo that it was impoſſible for us to land on any part of it, before we came to that head land. This made it very dangerous to attempt the paſſage; for if the wind ſhould happen to come round to the north-weſt, we muſt infallibly have periſhed againſt the rocks. But danger was no longer an object to be conſidered by us; ſo we got out two oars, not being able to uſe any more, as the boat had been ſo much damaged, that two men were conſtantly employed in keeping her clear of water, and with the aſſiſtance of a fair wind made the point about eleven o'clock at night; but finding no place that we could poſſibly land on, we were obliged to keep along the coaſt till two in the morning,

when the wind increaſing, and a ſtony beach appearing, on which we ſhould not have thought it expedient to land had the wind been moderate, we were obliged to put aſhore, and immediately got our proviſions out of the boat. The beach was of ſome height from the ſurface of the water, the ſea having beat the gravel up into a kind of bank; which rendered it impoſſible for us to haul our boat up. We were therefore obliged to leave her to the mercy of the ſea.

The place where we landed was a beach of about four hundred yards in length, bound at the diſtance of about fifty yards from the water's edge by a precipice of at leaſt one hundred feet in height, which incloſed it on all ſides. If the wind ſhould come round to the north-weſt, we knew that we ſhould be entirely deprived of ſhelter, yet, as the wind blew too freſh for us to attempt putting to ſea again, we were obliged to remain in it, notwithſtanding theſe inconveniences.

On

On the 13th the wind came round to the north-weſt, and blowing very hard, the ſea beat with ſuch violence againſt the ſhore, as to drive our boat twenty yards higher than ſhe was, and to beat ſeveral holes in her bottom. Now was the time for us to feel all the miſeries of our preſent ſituation; for being ſurrounded by precipices, which prevented us from ſheltering ourſelves in the woods, and having ſo little covering, and no firing but what we collected from ſome pieces of timber, which floated accidentally upon the ſhore, we could but juſt keep ourſelves from abſolute freezing. The ſame weather continued for eight days, with a prodigious fall of ſnow, which added to our other inconveniences. At length, on the 21ſt, the weather became more moderate, and the ſnow ceaſed, having in the courſe of this laſt week fallen to the depth of three feet perpendicular. This gave us an opportunity of cooking our proviſions, which we had done but once ſince our landing. Even this was a great loſs to us, as the water that the meat was boiled in afforded

forded us almoſt as much nouriſhment as the meat itſelf.

On the 22d we contrived with much labour to turn our boat halfway over, in order to examine the damage ſhe had received, which we found conſiderable; the coat of balſam being entirely rubbed off, and ſeveral holes made in her bottom. We expected the ice would go to ſea, as it had done once before, whenever the wind ſhould come round to the ſouthward, and therefore thought if we could but get our boat repaired, that we might ſtill have ſome chance of meeting with inhabitants. But the great difficulty was how to repair it; for we had no pitch or balſam left, and but little dry oakum, which was of no ſervice to us without the former. After trying various methods, we at laſt gave it up as a thing entirely impracticable, and began to turn our thoughts towards ſome other means of getting out of this bleak and barren place, to ſearch for ſome relief in an inhabited country.

Though

Though it was impoſſible for us to climb the precipice by which we were encompaſſed, yet, if we were determined to abandon our boat, we imagined, that we might eaſily get into the woods, by walking along ſhore upon the ice, which ſtill covered the ſea, and had ſtrength ſufficient to bear any weight. In fact the mate and I propoſed walking a few miles on it, in order to make the experiment; we had not proceeded far before we came to the entrance of a river, and a fine ſandy beach, where, had our good fortune directed us to land, we might have lived more comfortably, and have preſerved our boat. But what was to be done now that we could get into the woods? we could not think of walking acroſs them in ſearch of a cultivated country: beſides that we ſhould be entirely ignorant how to direct our courſe, the depth of ſnow, which had by this time increaſed to ſix feet in the wood, rendered it impoſſible for us to travel without ſnow-ſhoes. After conſulting together, we at laſt came to a reſolution of taking the next day what proviſions

viſions we had upon our backs, and coaſting along the ice, till we could diſcover ſome inhabitants, expecting from its preſent appearance of ſtrength, that it would remain for ſome time longer: and the wind having drifted the greateſt part of the ſnow off it, we computed that we ſhould be able to walk about ten miles each day, even in our preſent weak and reduced condition.

This being fully determined, we were to ſet out the morning of the 24th, but on the night preceding it, the wind came round to the ſouth eaſt, and blew hard, attended with ſnow and rain; ſo that in the morning, as I already apprehended would be the caſe, that whole ſheet of ice, which the night before looked ſo firm, was demoliſhed or driven out to ſea. Thus were all our ſchemes fruſtrated—neither ice to walk on, nor boat to carry us through the water; not even a poſſibility of moving from this place where we were embayed and ſurrounded by inſurmountable precipices. Thus circumſtanced,

we

we were again obliged to turn our thoughts entirely to ſome ſcheme for repairing our boat; upon that our only hope depended. We had plenty of oakum to ſtop up the holes and ſeams, but nothing to ſubſtitute in the room of pitch, to prevent the water from penetrating. I at length thought of a plan, which I imagined might have the wiſhed for effect, namely, that of throwing water over the oakum, and letting it freeze into a cake of ice. As ſoon as day appeared, I reſolved to put this ſcheme to the teſt, and having cleared the boat of ſnow and gravel, immediately went to work. The men in general made light of my undertaking, and aſſiſted with much reluctance, thinking that they were throwing away their labour to no purpoſe. However, I ſoon convinced them to the contrary; for by four o'clock in the afternoon, by continually throwing water over the oakum, we froze up every ſeam and hole in ſuch a manner, that not a drop of water could enter, as long as the weather continued freezing as at preſent.

On the 27th of January, the weather being very moderate, and a light breeze directly off the ſhore, we got our boat very carefully launched, and ſet off early in the morning from this ill-omened bay. We had the pleaſure to find that the boat made little or no water, ſo that we were enabled to keep our four oars continually at work. As we advanced along the coaſt, we found it ſtill bordered by nothing but barren precipices, with every four or five miles perhaps a ſmall ſandy beach.

The weather continued very moderate all the day of the 27th, ſo that by ſix o'clock in the evening, we computed that we had rowed about twelve miles from where we ſet off in the morning. This indeed would be but an indifferent day's work for people in health, but a great deal for thoſe in our circumſtances, not only being extremely weakened and reduced, but the boat itſelf being very heavy and unweildy, from the quantity of ice in it. We put aſhore about ſix o'clock upon a ſmall

ſmall ſandy beach, and, by laying oars under our boat, dragged her carefully ſome yards from the water; ſo that ſhe lay very ſafe while the wind continued as it then was. We next cut ſome branches, and, having made a fire, ſheltered ourſelves as well as poſſible in the wood. Our tinder being nearly conſumed, I was obliged to furniſh a freſh ſupply, by cutting away the back part of my ſhirt, which I had worn ever ſince we left the ſhip.

A ſhower of rain the next day unfortunately melted all the ice off our boat; we were therefore prevented from going any farther till a return of the froſt, and had the mortification to loſe the benefit of a fine day, in the courſe of which we might have proceeded with a good boat ſeveral leagues more on our journey. What made the matter worſe, was that our proviſions were now reduced to two pounds and a half of beef for each man. On the morning of the 29th the mate, having wandered a little diſtance from our fire, returned in haſte to inform me, that

he had diſcovered a partridge perched on the bough of a tree, which he thought I might poſſibly deviſe ſome method of catching. I immediately went to the place where he had ſeen it, and found it in the ſame ſituation as before. Obſerving that the bird was very tame, and not above fourteen feet from the ground, I cut down a long pole, and taking part of the rope-yarn that faſtened my canvas ſhoes made a running loop of it, and fixed it to the end of the pole; then walking ſoftly under the tree, and lifting the pole gently up, I fixed the loop about the partridge's neck, and, giving it a ſudden jerk, cloſed the loop, and ſecured the bird. The mate, as well as myſelf, as ſoon as I had caught it, laughed very heartily, for the firſt time that either of us had a ſmile on our countenances ſince our ſhipwreck. We then went towards the fire with our prize, and boiled it in ſome melted ſnow, together with a little ſalt water, to give the broth a reliſh: having divided it, when dreſſed, into ſix equal parts, and caſt lots for the choice of each, we ſat down to

what

what we found a moſt delicious meal; the only one, excepting the quart of cranberries, for which we were indebted to chance, or our good fortune, ſince we had been caſt upon the iſland.

On the afternoon of the 29th it began to freeze hard, when we took the advantage of the froſt to ſtop the boat's leaks as before; and, the wind ſtill continuing moderate, we launched her as ſoon as that buſineſs was completed, and put to ſea. The day being almoſt ſpent before we ſet off, we could not make above ſeven miles to a ſandy beach and thick wood, which ſeemed to afford a tolerable ſhelter. In this place we paſſed the night; and the next day, the weather being ſtill favourable, we launched our boat betimes in the morning, in order to get before night as far as poſſible on our journey; but we had not proceeded above ſix miles, before the wind freſhening up from the ſouth-eaſt obliged us to put aſhore and haul up our boat.

A heavy

A heavy fall of rain, which continued the whole day, rendered our ſituation extremely uncomfortable, and melted again the icy calking of the boat. We were therefore to conſole ourſelves, as well as we could, in the certainty of remaining here till a return of the froſt; and mean while propoſed to reconnoitre, as far as our reduced ſtate would allow us, into the country. In this however we were prevented by the quantity of ſnow which ſtill lay on the ground, and was not yet ſufficiently frozen to bear our weight without rackets or ſnow-ſhoes. Towards the ſpring of the year in theſe cold climates they may for the moſt part be diſpenſed with, when the ſnow has become more condenſed by its own weight, the influence of the ſun, and the rains which begin to fall at this ſeaſon. The froſt then returning, after the thaw, forms a kind of incruſtation on the ſurface, that will bear a man's weight without ſinking. Had this ſeaſon been arrived, we ſhould have abandoned our crazy boat, and taking the little proviſion we ſtill poſſeſſed, have

have made an attempt to diſcover inhabitants, by a march into the heart of the country; perhaps it was fortunate we could not attempt it, as in all probability we ſhould have periſhed in the woods.

Not having it in our power to wander towards any other part, we walked along the ſhore as far as we were able, and ſaw nothing that could attract our notice but ſome ſtumps of trees, from which the trunks might have been cut ſome years before: from this circumſtance we could collect no very ſanguine hope of being near an inhabited country. Soon after the wind coming round to the north-weſt, and bringing the froſt along with it, we were once more enabled to repair our boat, and to prepare for launching it, as ſoon as the wind ſhould abate its violence. This happening in ſome degree on the 1ſt of February, we immediately embarked, and purſued our coaſting voyage; but the ſeverity of the cold having formed a quantity of ice, it was with extreme labour that we contrived to get five miles

miles before night, one of our party being employed in breaking the ice with a pole, and clearing it from the bows of the boat.

The following day the wind blowing freſh from the north-weſt quarter prevented us again from proceeding any further till the 3d, when coming round to weſt, which is directly along the ſhore, and the moſt favourable that could blow for us, we were enabled to embark and purſue our voyage. Our boat, notwithſtanding all our diligence in calking, made now ſo much water, that we were obliged to keep one man conſtantly at work in baling it out with a camp kettle. The wind however was as fair as we could wiſh, and being neither too ſlack nor too violent, we for ſome time went at the rate of four miles an hour, with the aſſiſtance of our oars; but ſoon after, the wind increaſing, we laid in our oars, and run under our ſail alone, at the rate of about five miles an hour.

After

After having run above ſixteen miles, we diſcovered an exceeding high land, about ſix leagues diſtant, with ſeveral other mountains and large bays between us; and it being yet early in the day, a fine wind, and no great ſea, we were in hopes, if the wind ſhould not increaſe too much, that we ſhould be able to reach it before night. As we proceeded along the coaſt, we found it in every part high and rocky, which made us very uneaſy leſt the wind ſhould riſe before we could make the head-land. About two o'clock in the afternoon, when we ſuppoſed we were within three leagues of it, we diſcovered an iſland about twenty miles from the main; and on comparing circumſtances we concluded, that the iſland muſt be that of St. Paul, and the high land the north point of Cape Breton. The prodigious height of the land led us into an erroneous computation of its diſtance; for notwithſtanding we had ſuppoſed that we were within three leagues of it, when we firſt diſcovered the iſland of St. Paul,

we found, before we reached it, that we had run near five leagues.

It was almoſt dark by the time we reached the North Cape; where finding no place to land, we were obliged to double the cape, and continue our journey. The wind now began to freſhen, and we had a heavy ſea from the north-eaſt to encounter, as ſoon as we came oppoſite to the cape. After having doubled it, our courſe lay in a very different direction from what it had been in the morning; ſo that we were obliged to ſtrike our ſail, and take to the oars. The wind at the ſame time blew ſo hard off the high lands, that it was with the utmoſt difficulty we could hug the ſhore: had we not been aſſiſted by a heavy ſwell, that came from the north-eaſt, we muſt certainly have been blown out to ſea.

Finding no place to land during the night, we continued rowing as cloſe as we could to the rocks, till about five in the morning; when hearing the ſea run on

on the ſhore very long and heavy, we imagined, we muſt be off a ſandy beach. We accordingly rowed towards the ſhore, and at the diſtance of fifty yards, for it was yet dark, were able to diſcern a beach at leaſt four miles in length. It was not however a convenient place for us to put in, on account of the ſurf, and a long and heavy ſea that rolled on it; yet being ſo much fatigued with rowing, that we were incapable of proceeding any further, we were obliged to attempt a landing. This we effected with more eaſe than we looked for, and ſuffered no other inconvenience but that of having our boat nearly filled with water on the beach. Having landed, our firſt care was to haul up the boat, that ſhe might meet with no further damage from the ſea. We then got into the woods, which lay cloſe to the ſhore, and having taken the precaution to put our tinder-box in my boſom, before we landed, to preſerve it from the water, we contrived to kindle a fire; a refreſhment we had much occaſion for, having got wet in landing,

and being in ſo weak and reduced a condition, that it was with the greateſt difficulty we could keep ourſelves awake for a few minutes when before the fire; ſo that we were under the neceſſity of keeping a continual watch, leſt, all being aſleep together, we ſhould freeze to death, as ſoon as the fire went out. Having now time to conſider every circumſtance, and finding, as ſoon as daylight appeared, that the land ſtill continued to have an oppoſite bearing to that on the other ſide of the point, we had no doubt remaining, but that we were upon the North Cape of the iſland of Breton, which, together with Cape Roy on the iſland of Newfoundland, marks the entrance of the gulf of St. Lawrence.

Our proviſions were now entirely conſumed, and having not the ſmalleſt proſpect of getting any more, we were ready to abandon ourſelves to deſpair. As we were certain of being on an inhabited iſland, we might have flattered ourſelves with the hopes of getting relief, by perſevering

ſevering in our dilatory progreſs, had we wherewithal to provide for our immediate ſubſiſtence. Having weighed the neceſſity of the caſe, and the miſery of periſhing by hunger, I was of opinion as well as the mate, that it would be moſt adviſeable to ſacrifice one for the preſervation of the reſt; and that the moſt proper method would be by caſting lots, which ſhould be the unfortunate victim. But, this ſhocking, though prudent, reſolution we agreed to put off to the laſt extremity.

We had not been able to ſecure our boat ſo effectually, but that the ſea had beat her higher up on the beach, and filled her with ſand. We were obliged therefore to ſet two of the men to work in clearing her, and afterwards in ſtopping the leaks, as already mentioned; while the remainder of our party were detached by different routes along the ſhore, to ſee if they could find any kind of proviſion. The mate and myſelf travelled along the ſandy beach till we were prevented from going any further by an inlet of water, when

when we were a good deal ſurprized to obſerve the tide ebb and flow every ten minutes. We were not however, at preſent, in a diſpoſition to pay much regard to this or any other extraordinary appearance of nature; and ſeeing a great quantity of oyſter ſhells lying upon the ſhore, we ſearched them very diligently, in hopes of finding ſome that were full; but to no purpoſe. This again made us curſe our deſtiny, that we ſhould have been caſt away on ſo barren and miſerable a country, and in ſuch an unlucky time of the year, when we were not only deprived of the relief we might have got, at any other ſeaſon, from the natural productions of the earth; but when even the animals, inhabitants of both elements, had retired to their holes and hiding places, to ſhield themſelves from the intenſe cold, which prevails during the winter in this inhoſpitable climate

We ſtill continued our ſearch notwithſtanding the ill ſucceſs we had hitherto experienced, and contrived at length to gather about two quarts of hips, or wild roſe

roſe buds, by throwing up the ſnow in different parts of the bank. Having with this ſorry food allayed in ſome degree the keen ſenſe of hunger, and the wind having become ſomewhat more moderate, we got into our boat and puſhed off, the day being already drawing towards a concluſion. Our progreſs was however ſoon impeded by the quantity of ice that floated upon the water; which obliged us to put aſhore on another part of the ſame beach. In landing I had the misfortune to let the tinder-box fall from my boſom into the water, by which means we were unable to kindle a fire; and being exceedingly wet, which was generally the caſe when we landed, we were in this place in a moſt uncomfortable ſituation, and ſuffered much from the cold. We therefore thought it beſt to get into our boat again as faſt as poſſible, and return to the ſpot from whence we came, in hopes of finding ſome fire ſtill remaining.

It was with the greateſt difficulty we got back, being the whole way under the neceſſity

neceſſity of breaking through the ice, which had by this time almoſt formed into a ſolid ſheet. We were very anxious leſt our fire ſhould meanwhile have gone out, and thought it a lucky circumſtance we had not been able to go any farther from it. On our arrival at the place, we had the ſatisfaction to find it was not totally extinguiſhed: had this been the caſe, we muſt have periſhed in the courſe of the night. The fire being repaired, I cut up the remainder of my ſhirt to make ſome more tinder; and, as the damage it got had nearly proved ſo fatal to us, was reſolved to be more particular in my care of it for the future.

On the 8th the wind came round to the ſouth-weſt, which cleared off the ice, and enabled us to leave this place by ten o'clock in the morning. As we proceeded along the ſhore, we found it was not quite ſo rocky as it had been on the other ſide of the north cape. We were therefore able to land this night without difficulty within a large rock, by which we were ſheltered

ſheltered from the wind and ſea. We were here very comfortably ſituated, in every reſpect, except in regard to our want of proviſions. The next day, the weather continuing moderate, we had again proceeded about eight miles on our journey, when the wind beginning to blow ſo hard as to raiſe a conſiderable ſwell, we were obliged to ſteer to the ſhore. In landing we had the misfortune to loſe two of our oars, which were waſhed overboard by the ſurf.

On the following day the wind lulled; and we immediately took the advantage of it to put to ſea. We had now but two oars remaining; which being double manned, we contrived to get about ſix miles before night. This was a very hard day's work, conſidering our preſent weak condition; for having been a length of time without taſting any kind of nouriſhment, we were ſo much reduced in ſtrength, that when we got on ſhore, we could ſcarcely walk for fifty yards together.

The weather being unfavourable on the 11th, we were under the neceſſity of remaining the whole day in the ſame reſting place; and having leiſure to ſearch about the ſhore, we were fortunate enough to find a few roſe buds, which we eſteemed at preſent a great delicacy. Had we not met with this ſupply, it would have been abſolutely requiſite to put our abovementioned ſcheme into execution. We thought ourſelves extremely unlucky in not having found, in the courſe of our wanderings, ſo much as the body of any dead animal: nor, except the partridge, did we ſee any live ones, that we had the ſmalleſt chance of capturing. At different times we had hopes of catching ſome of the otters that we frequently ſaw on the ice, particularly on the ſmall rivers and inlets: but we never found them at any diſtance from the holes, which they continually kept open, to give themſelves a free paſſage in and out of the water. We likewiſe diſcovered at different times ſome beavers' houſes; but could not enſnare any of the animals.

On

On the 12th the wind became moderate, and we proceeded once more on our journey. The coaſt ſeemed to diminiſh in height as we paſſed along it, which made us hope we were now approaching the cultivated part of the iſland. Next day the weather got milder, with a fall of rain: ſo that it was with difficulty we could get our boat to ſwim, the ice thawing gradually off the bottom. This obliged us to put aſhore long before night. Having landed, and made a fire, we found no other immediate want but that of proviſions, having conſumed all the hips or roſe buds that we had gathered at our laſt landing place.

Having reconnoitred very carefully all around, and ſearched in every part under the ſnow, we were not able to procure ourſelves even that miſerable ſuſtenance. Being now driven to the laſt extremity, we were obliged to ſacrifice our proſpect of travelling any farther to the immediate preſervation of our lives. We had about a dozen tallow candles remaining, which

we had hitherto employed in ſtopping the leaks of our boat, as faſt as ſhe ſprung one in any particular place. Of theſe we divided a ſmall part among us; which gave us ſome relief for the preſent. On the 14th and 15th we coaſted for a few miles, ſearching for a place where we could meet with ſome hips; but to no purpoſe. This was the only kind of food we could now expect; and had we diſcovered any place that abounded with them, it was our intention to draw up the boat there, and remain till they were conſumed.

On the 17th, being again on the point of periſhing with hunger, we made another diviſion of a part of the tallow candles that yet remained. On the following day, the wind being favourable, we proceeded about five miles; where finding a fine, flat country, and a ſandy beach that extended for a conſiderable way, and being ſo much debilitated, that we knew it would be impoſſible for us to go much farther, we put on ſhore, with a determined

mined reſolution to periſh on this place, unleſs ſome unforeſeen accident ſhould bring us relief. To attempt drawing up our boat would in our preſent weak condition be a vain undertaking, ſo we were obliged to let her remain at the mercy of the ſea. All that we could preſerve was our axe, a ſaw, and the ſail of the boat, which we generally made uſe of as a covering.

As ſoon as we landed, we made it our buſineſs to clear away the ſnow from a particular ſpot in the entrance of the wood, where we intended to remain; and having cut ſome ſmall branches of pine to put under under us, together with ſome larger to ſerve for a ſhelter, which we ſtuck into the bank of ſnow that ſurrounded us, we made our fire; and then went all hands in ſearch of hips. We had the good fortune to find about a pint of them, which boiled up with a couple of tallow candles afforded us a tolerable meal.

The next day we paſſed without any kind of proviſion, and being apprehenſive

ſive that our little remaining ſtrength would ſoon deſert us, we employed ourſelves in cutting and piling as much wood as we were able, to ſupply the fire. Mean while the ſea had beat our boat ſo high upon the beach, as to be quite dry as ſoon as the wind ſubſided, and to deprive us of the power of putting to ſea again, had we been diſpoſed to do it: for our ſtrength was by no means equal to the taſk of moving her a ſingle foot.

We again employed the whole day of the 19th in the ſearch of hips: but it was not attended with any ſucceſs. Our tallow candles were therefore the only reſource we had left, and by this time they became reduced to two. We found ourſelves ſo much weakened the following day, that we could make no further uſe of our axe, and were under the neceſſity of creeping about in our turns, and breaking the rotten branches of trees, that lay ſcattered upon the ground. As we had not a proper quantity of fuel, the fire that we kept up was but juſt ſufficient to preſerve us from

from freezing: for though the ſeaſon was ſo far advanced towards the ſpring, yet, excepting ſome particular days, the weather was as cold as in the month of December.

Having now no more than two tallow candles remaining, and finding no longer a poſſibility of gathering any hips, being too weak even to ſearch for them, we thought it likely that we might derive ſome degree of nouriſhment from the kelp weed, of which there was a quantity lying upon the ſhore. We accordingly collected a little of it, and with melted ſnow boiled it for a few hours in a kettle; but, at the concluſion, found it very little tenderer than at firſt. We then melted one of our tallow candles in the liquor, and having ſupped it up, and eat a quantity of the weed, our appetite became ſomewhat ſatiated. But in about two hours time we were all affected with a very uneaſy ſenſation, and were ſoon after ſeized with a fit of vomiting, without being able to bring it entirely off the ſtomach. This

fit

fit of vomiting having continued for about four hours, we found ourſelves tolerably eaſy, but at the ſame time exceedingly exhauſted.

On the 22d we made uſe of ſome more kelp weed and our laſt tallow candle. It ſtill operated in the ſame manner, but not to ſo violent a degree as it had done before. On the 23d the wind blew very moderate from the north-weſt, and brought a ſevere froſt along with it. We had now an opportunity to repair our boat; and, if our ſtrength had been ſufficient to launch it into the water, we ſhould have changed our reſolution, and have quitted the place. We made indeed a faint attempt to launch the boat; but, on finding that we could not move her an inch from where ſhe lay upon the ſhore, we were obliged to give over the deſign. Our candles being all conſumed, we were under the neceſſity of boiling the kelp weed without the mixture of tallow, which, however nauſeous at any other time, afforded us then, not only

only a wholeſome nouriſhment, but even an exquiſite reliſh.

Having now for three days taſted of no other food but the kelp weed, we began to ſwell to an alarming degree. This we were at a loſs whether to attribute to the kelp weed or to the cold (for we were not able to keep a ſufficient fire); however I thought then and do ſtill believe, that it proceeded from the former: for notwithſtanding we had often before been expoſed to the utmoſt ſeverity of the cold, and ſometimes without any ſhelter whatever, yet we had never found ourſelves affected with this extraordinary ſymptom; but, on the contrary, were as much reduced in bulk as we were in ſtrength.

We remained in the ſame miſerable ſituation for ſeveral days longer, the ſwelling having increaſed to ſuch a degree all over our bodies, that, notwithſtanding the little fleſh we had upon our bones, we could ſink our fingers two inches deep on the ſkin; the impreſſion of which remained

viſible for above an hour after. Hunger nevertheleſs ſtill obliged us to make uſe of the kelp weed; though I am certain it was of no great ſervice, and tended only to blunt the edge of our appetite, inſtead of affording any nouriſhment to the conſtitution. I have never ſince conſulted with any naturaliſt or phyſician about the extraordinary effects of the weed; yet doubt not but they may be accounted for from natural cauſes.

We paſſed a few days more in the ſame manner; at the expiration of which we were ſo much ſwollen, as to be almoſt deprived of our ſight, and ſo reduced, that it was with the utmoſt difficulty we could keep our fire in by crawling about in turn, and gathering the rotten branches that lay ſcattered upon the ground. The time was now arrived, when I thought it highly expedient to put the plan before mentioned into execution; but on feeling the pulſe of my companions, found that ſome of them were rather averſe to the propoſal; the deſire of life ſtill prevailing above

above every other ſentiment, notwithſtanding the wretched condition they were in, and the impoſſibility even of preſerving it by any other method.

I thought it an extraordinary inſtance of infatuation, that men ſhould prefer the certainty of a lingering and miſerable death, to the diſtant chance of one more immediate and leſs painful. However, on conſulting with the mate what was to be done, I found that though they objected to the propoſal of caſting lots which ſhould be the victim, yet all concurred in the neceſſity of ſome one being ſacrificed for the preſervation of the reſt. The only queſtion was how it ſhould be determined: when by a kind of reaſoning, more agreeable to the dictates of ſelf-love than of juſtice, it was agreed on, that as the captain was now ſo exceedingly reduced, as to be evidently the firſt who would ſink under our preſent complicated miſery, as he had been the perſon to whom we conſidered ourſelves in ſome meaſure indebted for all our misfortunes; and further, as

he had, ever ſince our ſhipwreck, been the moſt remiſs in his exertions towards the general good, he was undoubtedly the perſon who ſhould be firſt ſacrificed.

I muſt confeſs, that I thought at that time, there was ſome colour of truth in this concluſion: yet I was not a little ſhocked at the captain's intended fate, although I had more reaſon than any one elſe to be incenſed againſt him, not only on account of his neglect of duty, and his mal-practices at the hut in purloining our proviſions, but for another reaſon likewiſe. Since our ſhipwreck, I had diſcovered by ſome papers, which had been waſhed on ſhore, that, though the captain's pretended deſtination was to New York, yet that his real one was to the Weſt Indies, if he could poſſibly effect it. Thus would he have baffled General Haldimand's intentions, in ſending me with diſpatches, that might be of the firſt conſequence to this country; and not only have diſappointed, but alſo have defraud-

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ed me of the money, which I paid him for my paſſage.

The determination now made was kept ſecret from the captain, and it would have been impoſſible for us to live many days longer without putting it into execution, had we not happily met with relief from a quarter that we little expected. On the 28th of February, as we were all lying about our fire, we thought that we heard the ſound of human voices in the woods; and ſoon after diſcovered two Indians, with guns in their hands, who did not ſeem yet to have perceived us. This ſight gave us freſh ſtrength and ſpirits: ſo, getting up, we advanced towards them with the greateſt eagerneſs imaginable.

As ſoon as we were perceived by the Indians, they ſtarted back, and ſeemed fixed for a few moments to the ground with ſurprize and horror. This indeed is not to be wondered at, when it is conſidered, that, beſides the ſurprize they muſt

muſt naturally have felt on ſuddenly meeting with white men in this barren part of the iſland, our appearance itſelf was enough to alarm the moſt intrepid: our cloaths being almoſt burnt off our backs, our bodies and limbs ſwollen to to ſuch a prodigious bulk, our eyes from the ſame cauſe almoſt inviſible, and our hair in ſuch a diſhevelled ſtate about our heads and ſhoulders, particularly of thoſe who wore it long; for we had not been able to comb it ſince our ſhipwreck. As we advanced towards the Indians, ſome of us wept, while others laughed, through joy. Being a little recovered from their ſurprize, they did not ſhew much inclination to accoſt us, till I got up to one of them, and took him by the hand; when he ſhook it for ſome time very heartily; the uſual mode of ſalutation among the Indians.

They began at length to ſhew marks of compaſſion at our diſtreſſed appearance, and I imagine their ſhyneſs at firſt proceeded from the repugnance which it na-

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turally inſpired: for, theſe Indians being converted to Chriſtianity, I will not attribute it to a motive ſo contrary to that doctrine, as the idea of the trouble they might expect, without any compenſation, in relieving us. They then walked with us to our fire, and, ſitting down by it together, one of them, who could ſpeak a little broken French, deſired we would inform him whence we came, and the particulars of the accident that brought us there. I accordingly gave him as conciſe an account as poſſible of the diſaſters and fatigues we had undergone: during the relation he ſeemed to be very much affected at our ſufferings.

Having finiſhed my narration, I aſked the Indian, if he could furniſh us with any kind of proviſions; to which he anſwered in the affirmative. Obſerving that we had very little fire, he ſuddenly ſtarted up, and took our axe in his hand; when looking at it, and laughing heartily, I ſuppoſe at the badneſs of it, he threw it down again, and taking his tomahawk from

from his ſide, which is a ſmall hatchet that the Indians always carry about them, he went, and, in a ſhort time, cut a quantity of wood, which he brought and threw upon our fire. This done, he took up his gun, and, without ſaying a word, went off with his companion.

This would have been a very alarming circumſtance to perſons ignorant of the Indian manners. But I was ſo well acquainted with the humour of theſe people, who ſeldom ſpeak when there is not an abſolute occaſion for it, that I doubted not but they were gone for ſome proviſions, and that we ſhould ſee them again very ſhortly. Notwithſtanding the length of time we had been without nouriſhment, I muſt confeſs, that I felt but little inclination to eat: the fire which the Indian had made was the greateſt refreſhment to me, as we had been for many days without a good one.

After about three hours had elapſed, during which interval ſome of our party were

were not without anxiety, leſt the Indians ſhould never return, we perceived them coming round a point at a ſmall diſtance in a bark canoe. Being arrived and landed upon the beach, they took out of their canoe ſome ſmoaked veniſon, and a bladder of ſeal oil, which they brought up to our fire-place; having put ſome of the meat into our kettle, they boiled it in melted ſnow, and then gave each of us a very ſmall quantity of it, together with ſome oil. I knew very well their reaſon for being ſo ſparing of their meat; for eating a quantity of groſs food in our preſent ſtate might be attended with the moſt fatal conſequences. It gave me no ſmall pleaſure to find that the Indians were ſo careful of us.

This light repaſt being ended, the Indians deſired three of us to embark in their canoe, that being all ſhe could carry at a time, and proceed from this place to their hut, which lay five miles farther by water, and about a mile from the ſhore, in the middle of the woods. We were

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received at the ſea ſide by three other Indians, and about twelve or fourteen women and children, who had been there waiting our arrival. Having landed from the canoe, we were conducted by theſe laſt to their habitation in the wood, which conſiſted of three huts or wigwams, there being that number of families amongſt them: meanwhile the ſame two Indians as had brought us, went back in their canoe for the three remaining men of our party, who had been left behind. On arriving at the hut, we were treated with the greateſt humanity by theſe people; they gave us ſome broth to ſup, but would not ſuffer us to eat meat, or any kind of ſubſtantial food whatever.

The two Indians being come back with our companions, and having all received a tolerable refreſhment, I was deſired, at the requeſt of a very old woman, who appeared to be miſtreſs and mother of the families preſent, to give them an account of our tranſactions ſince the day of our ſhipwreck. I accordingly gave a more particular

particular account than I had done before in French to the Indian whom I have already mentioned; and he explained it in their own language to the other Indians. In the courſe of my relation I could perceive that the old woman was exceedingly affected at certain parts of it, which gave me much ſatisfaction, as I derived hopes from it, that they would continue to treat us with the ſame humanity. As ſoon as I had done ſpeaking, the old woman roſe up, and, after ſupplying us with ſome more broth, deſired the interpreter to explain to us the ſhipwreck of the famous French partiſan St. Lue Lacorne on his p[illegible] from Canada to France.

He informed me that this gentleman, of whoſe ſhipwreck I had already heard ſomething, was caſt away directly upon the North Cape; that a great number of perſons periſhed on the occaſion, amongſt whom were two of Mr. St. Luc's children, who were drowned in his arms, as he was attempting to carry them on ſhore. He likewiſe informed me, that after his hav-

ing remained five days there, and ſuffered much from cold and hunger, he himſelf had relieved him, and conducted him to Louiſbourg; for which ſervice, he ſaid, Mr. St. Luc was indebted to him thirty pounds, which he promiſed to remit from Hallifax, but had never performed it. Whether this part of the Indian's ſtory be true or not, it is impoſſible for me to determine: the gentleman himſelf is the beſt acquainted with it. But this I am certain of, that the poor Indians muſt have earned the money very dearly, in conducting him ſo far, at the ſeaſon of the year in which the journey was performed.

Theſe people did every thing [illegible]heir power to reduce the ſwelling from our limbs; which they at length accompliſhed after much difficulty. Having provided for own immediate wants, our thoughts recurred to thoſe unfortunate men whom we had left by the wreck. We were under much anxiety for them, leſt by this time they might have periſhed with hunger. However, in caſe they ſhould be ſtill alive, I was determined no means

ſhould be omitted for their preſervation, and having deſcribed to the Indians what part of the iſland we were caſt away upon, aſked them, If it was not poſſible to go to their relief?

From the deſcription I gave the Indians of the ſituation of the river, and of a ſmall iſland, that lay nearly oppoſite, they ſaid, that they knew the place perfectly well; that it was above one hundred miles diſtant, through very difficult paths, over rivers and mountains; and that if they undertook the journey, they muſt expect ſome compenſation for their trouble. This indeed was but reaſonable: for it could not be expected, that the Indians ſhould leave their hunting, by which alone they ſubſiſted their wives and families, to undergo a fatigue of that kind through pure benevolence: and as to their account of the diſtance, I could eaſily give credit to it, as I knew we had come above 150 miles by water. I then informed them, for the firſt time, for in fact it did not occur to me before, that I had ſome money,

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and that, if it would be any object to them, I would pay them for their trouble. They ſeemed much pleaſed when I told them that I had money, and deſired me to let them look at it. Then taking the purſe from my ſervant, I ſhewed them the hundred and eighty guineas that it contained; and obſerving an eagerneſs in their countenances at the ſight of the coin, which I had little expected amongſt Indians, and that the women in particular ſeemed to have a longing for it, I preſented them with a guinea each; for which they expreſſed their ſatisfaction by laughing, which is the only method among the ſavages of diſplaying every ſentiment of that nature.

However I was determined at all events to ſave the people, if any of them remained alive, though the Indians ſhould be ever ſo exorbitant in their demands; and made an agreement with them at laſt, that they ſhould ſet off the next day, which was the ſecond of March, and that they ſhould receive twenty-five guineas at their departure,

ture, and the ſame ſum on their return. This being ſettled, they immediately went to work in making a proper number of mawkiſins and ſnow ſhoes, for themſelves and for the men; and three of them went off the next morning, having received the ſum of money agreed for.

After theſe people knew that I had money, my ſituation amongſt them was not near ſo comfortable as before: for they became as mercenary as they had hitherto been charitable, and exacted above ten times the value for every little neceſſary they furniſhed for myſelf and the reſt of my companions. Beſides which, I was under conſtant apprehenſion, leſt they ſhould be incited by this extraordinary paſſion for money to plunder us, and leave us in the ſame deſtitute condition in which they found us. The only circumſtance on which I founded my hope of better treatment from them, was their religion: for, as I mentioned before, they were Chriſtians, and rigid Catholics, having been converted by the French before we got

got poſſeſſion of the iſland. But perhaps it was this very circumſtance of their communication with Chriſtians, that had inſpired them with that vehement love of money. They ſhewed indeed every mark of attachment to their faith, being very aſſiduous at their devotions both night and morning; and frequently gave us cauſe to wiſh they had not been quite ſo devout, by diſturbing us with their pſalm ſinging the whole night. I was very much afraid at times, if they had learnt that tenet of their ſect, of keeping no faith with heretics, that their profeſſion of Chriſtianity would be of little ſervice to us. My ſervant being an Iriſh catholic, they were exceedingly fond of him, and heaped their favours upon him very profuſely. He joined them for the moſt part in their roaring, for I cannot with propriety call it ſinging, and in their prayers; though he did not underſtand a word of either. Indeed I queſtion much whether they themſelves underſtood them, for they were the moſt confuſed jargon I ever heard, compounded of their own and the French

French language, with the mixture of a few broken Latin phraſes, which they had picked up from their converters, the Jeſuits.

Theſe inſular ſavages bore in general an exact reſemblance in their perſons and manners to thoſe of the continent. The principal points in which they differed were, in having their hair long, which is peculiar to the women alone among the continental Indians, and in wearing breeches, and caps upon their heads. Their language was very different from that of thoſe nations, or tribes, which I was acquainted with; though I doubt not but it might have a reſemblance to ſome others upon the continent. I found afterwards, when we got into a part of the iſland where it was to be had, that they had the ſame ſtrong propenſity to ſpirituous liquor, ſo univerſal among the Indians.

It was ſome time before we had recovered any degree of ſtrength, or could digeſt any ſubſtantial food. The only

kind we could get from the Indians was the fleſh of mooſe deer, and ſeal oil; on which they ſubſiſt entirely during the time of hunting. Notwithſtanding that we found ourſelves, after our late miſeries, pretty comfortably ſituated amongſt thoſe ſavages, yet I was anxious to get away, on account of the diſpatches I was charged with, which I thought might be of the utmoſt conſequence to his majeſty's ſervice; particularly, as I knew that the duplicates were loſt. I continued however in ſo weak a condition, that it was impoſſible for me to move for ſome time; and found, as well as my fellow-ſufferers, that ſuch a ſhock to the conſtitution was not eaſily to be repaired. Indeed I can never expect to recover it entirely, not having been ſince able to make a hearty meal, though it is now fifteen months from the time of our ſhipwreck.

After being abſent near a fortnight, the Indians arrived with three men, who were the only ſurvivors of thoſe who had been left behind at the hut. They were in

in a very reduced and miſerable condition, and informed me, on enquiring the particulars of their tranſactions from the time we left them, that after having conſumed all the beef, they lived for ſome days on the ſkin of the mooſe deer, which we had left entire, not thinking it worth while to make a diviſion of it. This being conſumed, three of them died in a few days of hunger, and the others were under the neceſſity of ſubſiſting on the fleſh of the dead men, till they were relieved by the Indians. One of the remaining five was ſo imprudently ravenous, when the Indians came to their aſſiſtance, as to eat ſuch a quantity of meat, that he expired in a few hours, in the greateſt agonies imaginable; and another ſoon after ſhot himſelf accidentally with one of the Indians' guns. Thus was our number, which originally conſiſted of nineteen perſons, reduced to nine; and I rather wonder how ſo many perſons could, for the ſpace of three months, go through ſuch complicated diſtreſſes, from exceſſive cold, fatigue, and hunger.

We all remained another fortnight among the Indians, during which I was obliged to pay, as before, a moſt exorbitant price for our diet, and for every neceſſary that we were provided with. By this time my health being ſomewhat reeſtabliſhed, and my money at the ſame time very much reduced, I was reſolved to poſtpone my own convenience to the good of the ſervice, and to proceed as faſt as poſſible with general Haldimand's diſpatches, though it was now the moſt unfavourable ſeaſon of the year for traveling. I therefore made an agreement with the Indians to conduct me to Hallifax; for which I was to pay them forty-five pounds, and to furniſh them with proviſions, and all neceſſaries, at every inhabited place on our way.

It was ſettled that I ſhould depart on the 2d of April, with two Indians for Hallifax, accompanied by Mr. Winſlow, a young gentleman who had been a paſſenger on board the veſſel, and one of the three ſurvivors at the hut, and my own ſervant.

ſervant. The Indians were to conduct the remainder of our party to a ſettlement on Spaniſh river, about fifty miles diſtant, where they were to remain till the ſpring, when an opportunity might offer for them to get by ſea to Halliſax. Previouſly to parting I gave the captain caſh for a bill on his owner at New York, to provide for the immediate ſubſiſtence of himſelf and the ſailors; which bill was afterwards proteſted by the owner, on the pretence, that the ſhip being loſt, neither maſter nor crew were entitled to any wages.

We accordingly ſet off on the day appointed, each carrying four pair of Indian ſhoes, or mawkiſins, a pair of ſnow ſhoes, and proviſions for fifteen days. The ſame day we got to a place called by the Engliſh Broad Oar, where we were detained the following day by a ſnow ſtorm. On the 4th we again proceeded through the woods about five leagues; and on the 5th arrived at a place named Broad Deck, which lies at the entrance of a very fine ſalt-water lake, called Lake St. Peter.

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This lake communicates by a narrow inlet with the ſea, from which it is diſtant about ſixteen leagues. At this place we met with two families of Indians, who were hunting there, and purchaſed of them a bark canoe for five pounds; the Indians having informed me, that ſome parts of this great lake are never frozen, and that it was requiſite to have a canoe to paſs over thoſe places; and as we were to travel over the ice in other parts of it, I was obliged to purchaſe two Indian ſleds, in which we were to place the canoe, and drag it after us.

Having remained two days in this place, and provided ourſelves with a few other neceſſary articles, we proceeded on the 7th for a few miles along the lake; but the ice being bad, we were ſoon obliged to take to the woods. A thaw coming on ſoon after, with rain, made the ſnow, which lay to the depth of ſix feet in the woods, ſo ſoft and heavy, that we could travel no longer on our ſnow ſhoes, the ſnow ſticking to them in large quantities.

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We were therefore obliged to make a fire, and remain here; and the thaw continuing till the 11th, made us very apprehenſive leſt the ice ſhould give way altogether: for the ſpring was now too far advanced to travel any longer upon the ſnow, unleſs during a froſt. We ſhould then have been under the neceſſity of waiting till the ice was entirely cleared off the lake; which would have taken at leaſt a fortnight or three weeks from the time of its breaking up, and might have been reduced to a condition equally diſtreſſed with that we had been in after our ſhipwreck, except that we were provided with arms and ammunition.

However the froſt returned on the 12th, and the next day we ſet off, and travelled about ſix leagues, ſometimes on floating pieces of ice, and at others in our canoe, where the lake was open. On the 14th our proviſions being nearly exhauſted, I propoſed going in ſearch of ſome game, as the country abounded with mooſe deer: for the Indians in general never

never think of providing for the next day's wants, but eat on without reflection whilſt they have a morſel of food remaining. I accordingly went with one of the Indians into the woods. We had not been three hours on the hunt, before we diſcovered a very fine mooſe deer; and the Indian ſhot him in about an hour after. We ſkinned this animal, which weighed about ſix hundred pounds, loaded ourſelves with ſome of the beſt parts of its fleſh, as well as the blood, which the Indian took care to collect, putting it in the bladder of the beaſt; and returned to our canoe. On our return, we ſent the other Indian, Mr. Winſlow, and my ſervant for ſome more of the meat, of which they brought about an hundred pounds.

Being now well ſtocked with proviſions, we had no reaſon to apprehend that we ſhould want, in caſe a return of mild weather ſhould render it impoſſible for us to travel either upon the lake or in the woods. On the 15th we ſet out very early in the morning, and purſued our journey

journey about ſix leagues, in the ſame manner as before. The greateſt inconvenience that we felt was the want of bread, which the Indians of this country never make uſe of whilſt they are hunting; and being now much wearied with travelling, our ſtrength having been greatly exhauſted by our paſt fatigues, we agreed to make a halt for a day or two in the woods. What renders the travelling through the woods in theſe cold climates more tolerable than might be ſuppoſed during the winter ſeaſon, is the number of pine-trees and other evergreens, which are interſperſed in different parts; the branches of which ſerve, not only to lie upon, but alſo as a ſhelter from the ſeverity of the weather. We choſe a ſpot abounding with theſe trees, and it is almoſt inconceivable in how ſhort a time the Indians made us a comfortable habitation of the boughs, called in their language a *wigwam*. Their method of conſtructing them is as follows: Having choſen the ſpot for their fire, they firſt clear off the ſnow, throwing it up into a

bank in a circular form, leaving a vacant ſpace, or paſſage, to leeward: and it is to be obſerved, that the more ſnow there is on the ground the better, as it makes the beſt part of the ſhelter. They then cut branches of pines, of a proper length, and placing the thicker ends of them in the bank of ſnow, bend and interweave them towards the top. Theſe branches are croſſed by others, and interwoven with ſmaller ones, in ſuch a manner, as to afford a ſufficient ſhelter from the wind and from the ſnow. The fire is made in the middle of the wigwam, and the ſmoke of it goes out by the paſſage to leeward. The wigwams thus made are very comfortable, even in the coldeſt weather, and are proof againſt any thing but a heavy rain; beſide which, a change of wind is the only inconvenience they are liable to.

We proceeded again on our journey on the 18th, and, during that and the following day, travelled ſeveral miles, without meeting with any thing remarkable.

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I had now leiſure to obſerve the beauties of this lake, which was one of the fineſt I ever ſaw in America; though at this ſeaſon of the year it could not appear to the beſt advantage. As far as I could judge, it is about twenty leagues in length from north to ſouth, and eight wide from eaſt to weſt. A number of ſmall iſlands are ſcattered about in different parts of it, and give the lake ſomewhat the appearance of the lake of Killarny, and other freſh water lakes in Ireland. Theſe iſlands have never been ſettled on; yet appear to be very fruitful, and muſt be a moſt delightful reſidence in ſummer, except for the want of freſh water; which perhaps may be the reaſon they have never been inhabited. Had the lake been properly frozen, we might have ſaved ourſelves the trouble of travelling ſeveral leagues, by croſſing over from point to point, and from one iſland to another: but, this not being the caſe, we were obliged to travel round the greateſt part of the bays on one ſide of it.

On the 20th we arrived at a place called St. Peter's, where there are four or five French and Engliſh families ſettled. I was here received very politely, and entertained at the houſe of a Mr. Cavanaugh, a merchant. To this harbour veſſels of the greateſt burthen can come with ſafety, and a conſiderable fiſhery was formerly carried on here, till, on the breaking out of the preſent war, the American privateers put a ſtop to it. The force of theſe privateers, even taken collectively, is but trifling; and it is much to be regretted, that government cannot ſpare a veſſel or two of force to cruize about here, and protect the fiſheries; which, together with ſome other branches of trade, might be carried on with as much vigour, and much more benefit, than before the war. This Mr. Cavanaugh, but a ſhort time before I arrived, was plundered to the amount of three thouſand pounds, by two privateers from Boſton; who came in at their leiſure, and took what they wanted out of his ſtores. Theſe American privateers have

have likewiſe driven all the ſettlers away from Louiſburg, who had alſo ſubſiſted by the fiſhery; and it is ſomewhat remarkable, that this place, which was, during the two laſt wars, ſuch a bone of contention between us and the French, has not at the preſent moment ſo much as a ſingle inhabitant.

I ſhould have taken a ſhallop or fiſhing boat from this place, and gone to Halliſax by ſea, but that there was almoſt a certainty of being taken by ſome privateer along the coaſt. This lake St. Peter is but half a mile from the ocean, to which we were to carry our canoe through the the woods, and to proceed by water to the gut of Canceau. While the French were in poſſeſſion of the iſland, they had formed a deſign of cutting through this narrow neck of land and opening a communication on that ſide between the ocean and the lake, in order to bring in their large ſhips of war, to lie during the winter in the lake of St. Peter. For there is a ſufficient depth of water in the harbour of

St.

St. Peter for the largeſt ſhips of the line to ride, though there is not water enough in the inlet, by which the lake communicates with the ocean, to enable them to paſs up to the harbour.

After ſtocking ourſelves therefore with as much proviſions, and other neceſſaries, as we had occaſion for (for which I paid nine pounds) we ſet off on the 22d in our bark canoe, and arrived the ſame day at a place called by the French, Grand Grave; where there is a family or two of that nation. The wind blowing hard, we were obliged to remain here all night, and on the 23d proceed along the coaſt to a ſettlement called Diſcouſſe, where we were detained another day by ſome floating ice.

On the 25th we got to a place called Narraſhoc; where we were as hoſpitably entertained as we had been at St. Peter's. I here exchanged the remains of my regimental coat for a brown ſuit of cloaths, intending to paſs for the maſter of the ſhip,

ſhip, in caſe I ſhould happen to be taken by any of the rebel privateers at Canceau; and as the inhabitants of this place gave me to underſtand, that the people of Canceau were very much diſaffected to government, I took every precaution to diſguiſe the appearance of an officer.

We proceeded in our canoe, on the 26th, to the point of Iſle Madame; intending to croſs the great paſſage of Canceau. This paſſage is called the Gut of Canceau, from an Acadian ſettlement of that name on the continent; and ſeparates the Iſland of Cape Breton from Acadia, or, as it is now called by the Engliſh, Nova Scotia. The iſland of Madame lies in the middle of the gut, but rather nearer to Cape Breton than to the main; and the paſſage to this iſland is called the Small, that from the iſland to Canceau, the Great Paſſage. On making the point of Iſle Madame, we found that there was ſtill a great quantity of floating ice in the Great Paſſage, and, not thinking it prudent to venture in our frail veſſel amongſt it,

it, we returned to Narraſhoc, in order to procure a ſmall ſloop or veſſel that could reſiſt the ice.

Having accordingly provided one, we embarked our little canoe in it, and, on the 27th, the wind being as favourable as we could wiſh, got acroſs the paſſage, which is eight leagues, in three hours. The men, who navigated the veſſel to the other ſide, were very apprehenſive of ſome American privateers lying in the harbour of Canceau, having ſeen ſeveral in the bay two days before. Upon this intelligence, I gave my diſpatches and papers to one of the Indians, knowing well, that the rebels never attempt to ſearch or plunder any of theſe people. We were however ſo fortunate as to ſee no privateers on entering the harbour.

On landing at Canceau, I went to the houſe of a Mr. Ruſt, who is the principal man at this place, and acts as a juſtice of the peace under government, for which he receives about 100*l. per annum.* The in-

inhabitants on the other ſide, as well as the people who brought us over, having informed me, that this gentleman always ſupplied the rebel privateers with every neceſſary that his ſtores could afford, I was determined to be very cautious in every thing I ſaid in his preſence. Having paid the perſon who brought us over the gut, and thanked him for his private intelligence, I was conducted to the houſe of this Mr. Ruſt, to whom I paſſed myſelf for the captain of the ſhip. He aſked me a number of queſtions, the tendency of which I could eaſily perceive; and therefore gave him as evaſive anſwers as poſſible. I found that he had a brother-in-law, who was a firſt lieutenant on board a ſixtee n gun brig belonging to the rebels, which had gone out of the harbour of Canceau the day before.

We remained in this place till three o'clock the next morning, when, being apprehenſive of treachery on the part of our pretended friends, we ſet off without any intimation of it to Mr. Ruſt. From

this gentleman I had purchaſed a piece of ſalt pork and about eight pounds of biſcuit, which he ſaid was as much as he could ſpare, and for which I was obliged to pay him at leaſt thrice its value. We were now to proceed in our canoe along the coaſt to Hallifax, and had reaſon to fear, that we ſhould be again diſtreſſed for proviſions. However we were ſo lucky as to find, as we coaſted along, plenty of lobſters and other fiſh, which the Indians caught with prodigious dexterity. We were ten days going from Canceau to Hallifax, during which interval we did not meet with any ſettlement, and ſaw nothing worth mentioning, except a number of American privateers in different parts of the coaſt.

The Indians remained for a few days at Hallifax; when, having received the balance due to them, they took their departure for the iſland. I was obliged to continue here for two months longer, till an opportunity ſerved of a paſſage, in the Royal Oak, to New York; where I delivered

livered my diſpatches (in a very ragged condition) to Sir Henry Clinton.

The reſt of my fellow ſufferers in the ſhipwreck ſoon after arrived at Hallifax in a ſhallop from Spaniſh River. The captain, conſcious of the reception he would meet with, did not think proper to go to his owner at New York, to give an account of the loſs of his veſſel; but took his paſſage in a ſhip from Hallifax to London, and now ſerves as a pilot in the river Thames. The mate was, on account of his good conduct during the whole of our tranſactions, appointed by a gentleman in Hallifax to the command of a ſhip bound to the Weſt Indies.

THE END.

MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM